

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 20, 2010

The Honorable Bart Gordon
Chairman
Committee on Science and Technology
2321 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Ralph M. Hall
Ranking Member
Committee on Science and Technology
394 Ford House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Gordon and Ranking Member Hall:

As you begin work on the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Authorization Act of 2010, we are thankful for your past support and request your continued support for NASA. We ask that you respectfully consider the following concerns and requests in light of significant proposed changes to the President's NASA budget request.

As you know, a rededication of significant resources toward space research and development (R&D) programs is critical for sustaining in-house intellectual competencies necessary for future mission success, for maintaining NASA's credibility as the world's premier aerospace R&D agency, and for developing a fiscally realistic and sustainable, yet ambitious, human space flight program. Many NASA Centers whose primary responsibility is to research and develop enabling technology for space exploration, such as the NASA Glenn Research Center, stand to lose a significant portion of their research funds to support the modification or cancellation of the Constellation program. A significant reduction in long-lead R&D funding could force the agency to continue down the unsustainable path on which it currently finds itself.

As such, we ask that you support the President's Fiscal Year 2011 (FY11) NASA budget request to reverse the downward trend in funding for aeronautics research by fully funding aeronautics at \$580 million. This investment will serve to at least partially restore NASA's aeronautics programs that have been neglected over the past eight years. In particular, the proposed funding for green aviation within the Integrated Research Systems program will serve as a vital investment for America's burgeoning green economy.

We applaud the President's \$652 million request for Technology Demonstration, including the \$223 million request for the Enabling Technology Development and Demonstration (ETDD) program and ask that it be fully funded at the requested amount in FY11. We also ask that you reject postponing NASA's commitment to long-term research and technology development by fully funding the President's request for a \$572 million investment in Space Technology Development, as well as \$559 million in Heavy-Lift and Propulsion technology. In particular, we believe that investments in Solar-Electric Propulsion, High Efficiency Space Power Systems and Cryogenic Propellant Storage and Transfer within the Foundational Technology Domain will be critical in the development of next generation technologies to support future key NASA missions over the next decade.

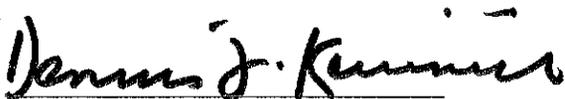
We also wish to express our deep concern with the possible inclusion of provisions that may lead to the improper privatization of inherently governmental (IG) functions at NASA. We ask that you reject provisions similar to those included in the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee NASA Authorization bill marked up last week that would allow for the improper outsourcing of oversight and management of International Space Station (ISS) research.

Our concerns also extend to the potential adverse ramifications of the President's proposal to cancel or modify the Constellation program. We are apprehensive that, without a detailed explanation or plan from the Administration on the role of the commercial space sector in crew transportation, the cancellation or modification of Constellation may be used to improperly privatize IG functions. Any commercialization of crew/cargo delivery to/from the ISS must be done carefully and with appropriate federal oversight. Furthermore, if crew/cargo access to ISS is commercialized or off-loaded to our international partners, we believe that the components of Constellation that are useful for human spaceflight beyond Low Earth Orbit (LEO) should be preserved and transitioned to the new Exploration mission. In particular, we ask that you include report language directing NASA to leverage to the maximum extent possible the ongoing technical work on Service Module for human spaceflight beyond LEO and in support of the proposed multi-purpose crew vehicle.

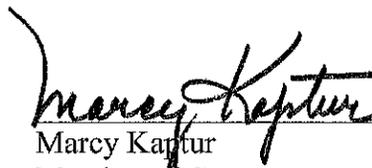
Finally, we request an extension of the ban on involuntary separations or Reduction in Force (RIF) and that you defund any study for the outsourcing or privatization of NASA's civil-servant workforce. After years of threats of involuntary reassignments and layoffs, repeated program reorganizations, annual buy-out pressure, and major cuts to in-house research and development funding, many NASA employees have retired or left the agency for positions with higher salaries and more stability. The proposed cancellation of the Constellation program or other significant changes proposed by the Administration must not come at the expense of the core intellectual competencies and institutional knowledge embodied within NASA's dedicated and talented civil servants. We must preserve NASA's most valuable asset, its uniquely skilled and experienced workforce, by defunding RIFs through Fiscal Year 2011.

Thank you for consideration of our request.

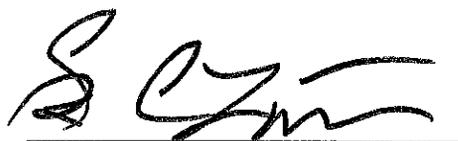
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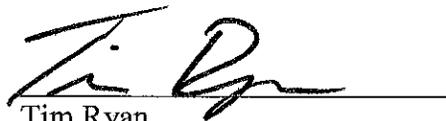
Dennis J. Kucinich
Member of Congress



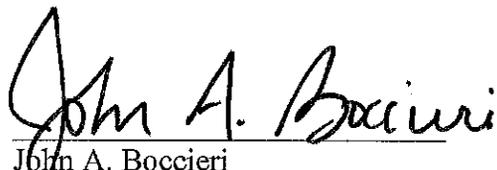
Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress



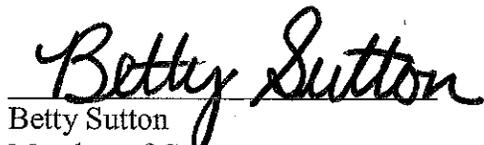
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Tim Ryan
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John A. Bocchieri
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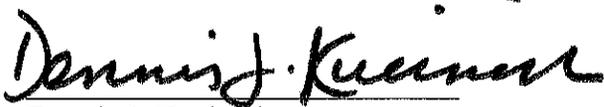
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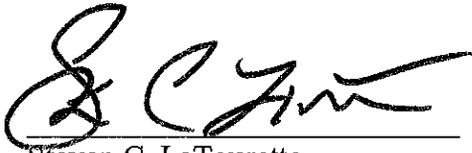
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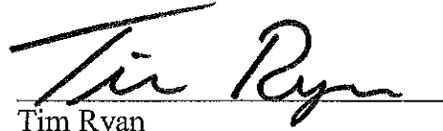
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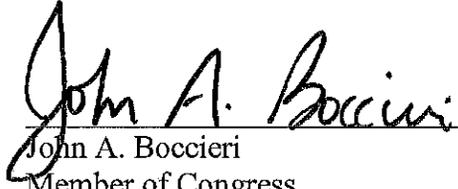
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